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Docket Number 03-080-1  
Regulating Analysis & Development, PPD  
APHIS  
Station 3C71, 4700 River Road, Unit 118  
Riverdale, MD 20737 - 1238

March 31, 2004

Dear Administrator:

I have been reading the comments submitted to you by the R-CALF USA organization, and rather than repeat them, let me just say that I am in full agreement with their comments and philosophy. However, I do have some additional personal thoughts as a result of having spent almost all of my adult life in agriculture, first as a lender for the Federal Land Bank and then 46 years in ranching.

It has been my observation that when a country begins to have an outbreak of BSE it starts very slowly with only one or two cases in the first year, such as in Japan, Germany and other European countries, and then increasing numbers of cases appear. The BSE situation in Canada is at least starting out in the same pattern. If the United States rushes into opening its borders to Canada's imports of live cattle and beef and BSE expanded in Canada, it could cause tremendous and permanent damage not only to our country's cattle and dairy industries but to our population's diet and protein food supply as well.

But even if there are no more cases of BSE in Canadian cattle, to open our borders to their imports will probably ensure that our own cattle industry does not recover the exports that were shut off last winter. Then to increase our imports of cattle and beef, while not recovering our exports, will cause a depression in Agriculture such as we have not seen since the 1930s. It would be amazing if it did not carry the rest of our country's economy down with it. The basic laws of Supply and Demand from Economics 101 have not been changed.

I am utterly dismayed at the prospect of an agency of our own government putting a major part of our own agricultural industry at such a risk for the benefit of another country's similar industry.

Thank you for this opportunity to present my comments.

*Jack Paulton*

Attached: 4 copies

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